

Message Text

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PAGE 01 YAOUND 01173 181422Z

ACTION AF-02

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FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

TO USINFO WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1345

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MEDIA REACTION: PRESS TREATMENT OF ZAIRE CONFLICT
FOR IOP/M, IBS NEWS COVERAGE DESK ATTENTION AFRICAN DIVISION
PASS IPS AFRICAN BRANCH

MARCH 18 ARTICLE IN FRENCH - LANGUAGE DAILY CAMEROON TRIBUNE
HEADLINED QUOTE WASHINGTON: WE ARE SENDING ARMS BECAUSE
COPPER THREATENED UNQUOTE MIXES COMMENTARY WITH REPORT ON ZAIRE
SITUATION.

QUOTE... CYRUS VANCE GAVE CONGRESS TO UNDERSTAND WEDNESDAY
THAT.. COPPER IS FOR THE UNITED STATES THE PRINCIPLE THING AT
STAKE IN THE FIGHTING.. IN FORMER KATANGA. UNQUOTE.

VANCE QUOTED AS SAYING QUOTE IT WOULD BE A VERY SEVERE BLOW
TO ZAIRE IF THE COPPER MINES WERE AFFECTED UNQUOTE TO JUSTIFY U.S.
DECISION TO AID ZAIRE. STORY ADDED VANCE SAID NO PROOF EXISTED
TO LINK CUBANS TO FIGHTING, BUT DID NOT EXCLUDE POSSIBILITY. STORY
ALSO SAID VANCE ESTIMATED VALUE OF QUOTE CIVILIAN AND MILITARY
EQUIPMENT UNQUOTE SENT AT 2 MILLION DOLLARS.

QUOTE JUSTIFYING AMERICAN AID TO ZAIRE BY NECESSITY
PRESERVING COPPER REGION OF SHABA RECALLS WHAT HAPPENED FOUR
YEARS AGO IN CHILE. IN THAT COUNTRY WHERE THE SOCIALIST REGIME
NATIONALIZED COPPER, THE UNITED STATES.. SUPPORTED A TRUCKERS
STRIKE WHICH PARALYZED THE COUNTRY AND CULMINATED IN THE TAKE-OVER
OF POWER BY GENERAL PINOCHET WHO HAS SINCE RULED BY TERROR UNQUOTE.

BALANCE OF 10-PARAGRAPH STORY REPORTS ANGOLA S DENIAL OF
INVOLVEMENT, WARNING TO WESTERN POWERS NOT TO TURN CONFLICT INTO
ANOTHER VIETNAM, CHARACTERIZATION OF CONFLICT AS INTERNAL
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OPPOSITION TO MOBUTU REPRESSION.

STORY IN MARCH 18 BULLETIN OF AGENCE CAMEROUNAISE DE PRESSE
FRENCH VERSION SUBSTANTIALLY IDENTICAL, EXCEPT CHILE NOT MENTIONED.
ENGLISH VERSION STORY ALSO SUBSTANTIALLY IDENTICAL MINUS CHILE,
BUT TERMS SUPPLIES QUOTE MEDICAL SUPPLIES, HAVERSACKS AND OTHER
EQUIPMENT UNQUOTE, ADDS THAT VANCE TOLD HOUSE COMMITTEE THAT QUOTE
MILITARY AID TO ZAIRE WAS HALF OF THAT FOR ALL AFRICAN AND THE FELT

U.S. HAD BEEN COMPENSATING..MOBUTU FOR HIS HELP TO ANTI-COMMUNIST
FORCES IN ANGOLAN CIVIL WAS UNQUOTE.

ARTICLE ENDS WITH EXERPTS FROM N.Y. TIMES EDITORIAL THAT U.S.
ACTION IS NOT BEGINNING NEW VIETNAM AND FUTURE U.S. AFRICAN POLICY
WILL BE TO SEEK SUPPORT EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH ECONOMIC LINKS.
PRILLAMAN

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